

The Community Messenger April 2026

Erica Extemporaneous

My very first Easter I was all of twenty-seven days old, but my dance card was full. Along with twenty-five or so of my closest friends and associates, I was baptized during the 10:45 am worship service at Warren First United Methodist Church [“309 North Park Avenue, one block north of Court House Square in Warren, Ohio.” *If you know, you know!*] My grandparents and my uncle were here from New York, and my Great Aunt Belle sang the “Brahm’s Lullaby.” I’m sure it was lovely, although rumor has it I slept peacefully through “The Halleluiah Chorus,” so you couldn’t prove it by me.

The following year we went to Scarsdale for Easter. It was my very first trip on an airplane. I am sure I was a delightful travel companion. (This is one of those instances when a wide-eyed emoji with clenched teeth or perhaps a face palm might be appropriate.) I got to meet Pop Baxter, my Great Grandpa on my Dad’s side of the family, along with my Great Aunts Catherine and Roberta, who through the years brought to mind the aunts in Roald Dahl’s wonderful book *James and the Giant Peach*.

That Easter also introduced the giant, inflatable, purple Easter Bunny. This not-so-little fellow would make an appearance just about every Easter during my childhood. It was much easier to spot the bunny than the basket, but then I sometimes lost interest in the basket. It was larger than life and held in its non-descript paws a giant Easter egg. Of course, when you are all of two weeks into your second year on the planet, just about everything seems larger than life.

This size of this silly little rabbit has been a topic of great debate. I know, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that bunny was big. I could stand next to it and we were eye to eye. I could wrap my arms around it. The look on its face was so joyful, I was certain it had fascinating stories to share.

My mom, on the other hand, insists that bunny was of a most modest proportion, hardly as huge as I recall. She is quick to remind me that I myself was relatively small. It’s all a matter of perspective.

A great many things in our world come down to a matter of perspective. Where exactly do you sit, or stand, as you fix your gaze at a particular point on the horizon? What exactly is it that is in your line of sight? And, perhaps more important to consider, what exactly is at stake?

With surely only the best intentions, we might convince ourselves that “all things being equal” is where we all begin, or at least where we should, or maybe could, end up. But I can’t help but wonder... It seems to me that it makes a difference – large or small; rich or poor; young or old; black or white; man or woman. It makes a difference – what we believe; what we’ve been taught, or told; what we’ve experienced, or imagined; where we came from; where we’re going. And, perhaps more than anything else, what we’re waiting for.

Now, about that bunny... I still don’t buy it. I’m telling you. It was not small.



Take good care,

Erica



News from the Official Board



The Board has approved the use of the Organ Fund, supplemented by Memorial Funds, to address some long-needed repairs to our wonderful Chancel pipe organ. The work will be performed in the Summer/Fall 2026 by Leek Pipe Organ Company from Berea.

Over the last couple of years, donations have been received for such repairs. We are currently looking at a contract to do about \$25000 in repairs. We have nearly all of the funds (\$20,000) but could use a few more donations to cover the entire cost. Please contact Alan Purdum or Patty DiGiacobbe with questions.

As always, thank you for your support of this project!

Greetings from Gabby!

Have you ever been really excited to see someone? So excited that you sit by the window, or maybe on the porch, waiting and watching for them to come down the street?

Have you ever shared a meal with someone that you didn't ever want to end? Even though dessert is usually the best part?

Have you ever been disappointed by someone who loves you? Have you ever disappointed someone you love?

Have you ever watched something terrible happen to someone you care about? Something so terrible you have to cover your eyes?

Have you ever known somebody who died? Did that make you feel sad? Do you still miss them?

Has anything ever happened to you that you just can't explain? Something that is really hard to believe? Something that is more amazing and beautiful and wonderful than you can even imagine?

Have all of those things ever happened to you the very same week?

You are not alone. In fact, you are in very good company.

"He is risen! He is risen, indeed!"



Your friends~

Gabby and John Howland

(with an assist from Pastor Erica!)

CLIENT CHOICE FOOD PANTRY

We're looking forward to our April 17th Food Pantry! We plan to bring in a larger amount of food on Thursday, the 16th, possibly a food truck from Second Harvest. So, please watch for announcements of times, as we'll be asking for volunteers to help us unload and stock shelves. On Friday, the day of the pantry from 3-5 pm, we hope to see volunteers!

~Linda Hitmar

Diaconate and Elders' Schedules – April 2026

Date	Elder	Diaconate Sanctuary (All Month)	Diaconate Kitchen (All Month)
April 5	Kathy Purdum	Barry Dunaway – Captain	Sanctuary Diane Hughes
April 12	Tom Hitmar	Leanna Dunaway	
April 19	Katy Kell	Gary Arblaster	JHR Dawn Adgate
April 26	Gretchen Hrusovsky	Preston Thigpen Bryson Thigpen	

Lectionary for April 2026

April 5, 2026 – Easter Sunday

Acts 10:34-43
 Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
 Colossians 3:1-4
 John 20:1-18

April 12, 2026

Acts 2:14a, 22-32
 Psalm 16
 1 Peter 1:3-9
 John 20:19-31

April 19, 2026

Acts 2:14a, 36-41
 Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19
 1 Peter 1:17-23
 Luke 24:13-35

April 26, 2026

Acts 2:42-47
 Psalm 23
 1 Peter 2:19-25
 John 10:1-10

Operating Fund

	February Activity	YTD Balance	Budget YTD
Income	\$22,164.77	\$49,972.36	\$44,308.00
Expenses	\$27,053.79	\$50,020.77	\$46,158.00
Difference	-\$4,889.02	-\$48.41	-\$1,850.00



Spring Word Scramble

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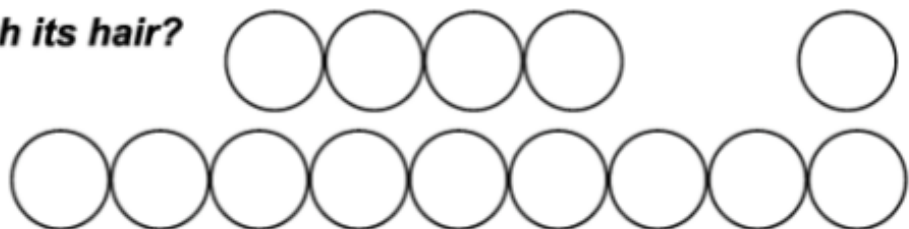
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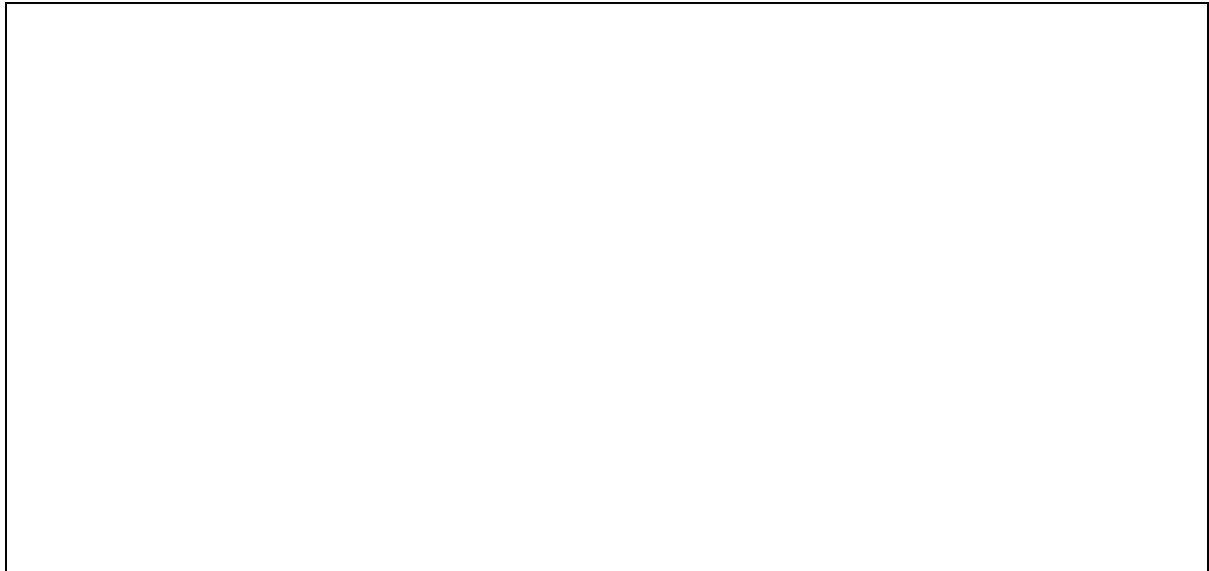
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How did the bee brush its hair?



April 2026 - HCC Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 1 PM Women's Group (JHR)	2 Maundy Thursday Service - 5:30 PM 6-8 PM Girl Scouts (NH)	3 Good Friday Services - Noon & 7:00 PM	4 1 PM NA (NH) 6 PM AA (NH)
5 9 AM Easter Brunch (JHR) 10 AM Worship 	6 6 PM Trustees 7 pm Boy Scouts (NH)	7	8 1 PM Women's Group (JHR)	9 7 PM Game Night (JHR)	10	11 1 PM NA (NH) 6 PM AA (NH)
12 10 AM Worship- Noisy Coin Offering	13 6 PM Open & Affirming Comm. 7 PM Elders 7 pm Boy Scouts (NH)	14	15 1 PM Women's Group (JHR)	16 6-8 PM Girl Scouts (NH)	17 3-5 PM Client Choice Food Pantry	18 1 PM NA (NH) 6 PM AA (NH)
19 10 AM Worship	20 6:30 PM Finance 7 PM Official Board 7 pm Boy Scouts (NH)	21	22 1 PM Women's Group (JHR)	23 7 PM Game Night (JHR)	24	25 11 AM - 12:30 PM Free Fellowship Meal (SH) 1 PM NA (NH) 6 PM AA (NH)
26 10 AM Worship GAB Sale donation drop-off 2-4 pm	27 GAB Sale donation drop-off 1-5 pm 7 pm Boy Scouts (NH)	28 GAB Sale donation drop-off 3-7 pm	29 GAB Sale donation drop-off 10 am - 2 pm 1 PM Women's Group (JHR)	30 GAB Sale Prep - 10 AM No Add'l Donations	MAY 1	MAY 2
						



HOWLAND COMMUNITY CHURCH
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ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED



Reverend Erica L. Brown, Senior Minister
 Andrew Purdum, Director of Music
 Rebecca Shelton, Organist
 Minta Pitts, Custodian
 Diane Andrews, Office Coordinator
 Alan Purdum, Chair of the Congregation
 Sarah Sanders, Vice-Chair of the Congregation

The Community Messenger is the monthly newsletter of the **Howland Community Church** (affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the United Church of Christ, and the International Council of Community Churches). Our church is “**A House of Prayer for All People.**” We offer Sunday School for children and a fellowship gathering after Worship. Communion is served every Sunday.

Office Hours:
Monday – Thursday
9:00 am – 1:00 pm

